

COMMISSIONERS MEETING

September 6, 2023

YORK,ss

At a regular meeting of the County Commissioners of the County of York, begun and holden at the York County Government Building in Alfred, within and for the County of York, being held on Wednesday, September 6, 2023, A. D. at 5:00 P. M.

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT:

Richard R. Dutremble
Richard Clark
Robert Andrews
Justin Chenette
Donna Ring

County Manager Gregory Zinser and Deputy County Manager Linda Corliss were present at the meeting.

YOU ARE INVITED TO RISE AND SALUTE THE FLAG OF THE UNITED STATES

09-06-2023 ITEM

1 **PUBLIC COMMENT(S) ON ANY ITEM(S)**

Janet Drew addressed the Board via ZOOM and stated that she is interested in hearing about the full- time Victim Advocate opening/hiring. Ms. Drew added that it is important to know who the victims are.

2 **TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE FOLLOWING MEETINGS:**

- a. Commissioners' meeting of August 2, 2023
Commissioner Clark motioned to approve the minutes. Commissioner Andrews seconded the motion. Vote 5-0.

3 **TO APPROVE TREASURER'S WARRANTS**

- a. Warrants to be approved on August 2, 2023 in the amount of \$775,474.50
Commissioner Clark motioned to approve the warrant. Commissioner Andrews seconded the motion. Vote 5-0.
- b. Warrants to be approved on August 9, 2023 in the amount of \$683,838.24
Commissioner Clark motioned to approve the warrant. Commissioner Andrews seconded the motion. Vote 5-0.
- c. Warrants to be approved on August 16, 2023 in the amount of \$291,609.34
Commissioner Clark motioned to approve the warrant. Commissioner Andrews seconded the motion. Vote 5-0.
- d. Warrants to be approved on August 23, 2023 in the amount of \$279,864.19

Commissioner Clark motioned to approve the warrant. Commissioner Andrews seconded the motion. Vote 5-0.

- e. Warrants to be approved on August 30, 2023 in the amount of \$453,922.49
Commissioner Clark motioned to approve the warrant. Commissioner Andrews seconded the motion. Vote 5-0.

4 TO HEAR ANY REPORTS FROM THE COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

Commissioner Dutremble informed all that the county convention is next week.

5 NEW BUSINESS

- a. Introduce Archivist Paige Lilly to give report on Phase 2 –
County Manager Greg Zinser introduced Archivist Paige Lilly who explained to the Commissioners that she finished phase 2 in June 2023. She showed an outline (included as record of minutes) of items done and recommendations of things that needs to be done. Commissioner Clark asked what's left to be digitized? Paige Lilly replied all the microfilm 20 -30 rolls. Commissioner Clark asked what the cost would be to digitize the microfilm. Paige Lilly replied about \$150.00 to have the State Archives digitize the microfilm. She added that the county also needs to purchase a replacement for our microfiche reader.

*****CORRECTED COSTS SUBMITTED BY MS. LILLY AFTER THE MEETING*****

Estimated cost to hire Maine State Archives to convert black and white microfilm of the official Commissioners Court record books (both Court of Common Pleas and General Sessions of the Peace):

- Approximately \$180 for 4 rolls of the 8 books at the courthouse in Alfred
- Approximately \$ 900 for additional 19 rolls of 41 books in Augusta

The estimate is based on \$.04 per page and extrapolated from a rough count of total pages in the books at Alfred. (More microfilm exists for related books and case files, but we don't have a count on which to base an estimate.)

- b. Discuss date and time for Spirit of America Awards ceremony
Recommend meeting in November, prior to a regular meeting
County Manager Zinser explained that the hope is that the new room will be ready. In the past we have held the ceremony at 3:00 prior to the meeting. We can hold it either the first or third meeting in November. Commissioner Chenette asked if it was broadcast? County Manager Zinser responded that he would have to go back and look. Commissioner Chenette replied that it is a nice event so why not hold it during the meeting so people can see the recipients? County Manager Zinser explained that we have the ceremony and then have a mingling period.
- c. To set date to hear tax abatement denial appeal Hearing of Steve McLean of Limerick- suggested date of October 4, 2023
Commissioner Clark moved to hear the tax abatement denial appeal Hearing on October 4, 2023. His motion was seconded by Commissioner Andrews. Vote 5-0.

- d. To review RFPs and bids and seek approval for back up dispatch center
County Manager Zinser explained that the bid received was in the amount of \$479,455.00. He continued that this process was completed in compliance with all Federal requirements and utilizes previously committed ARPA funds. Commissioner Ring questioned if this amount of money is within what we had previously requested? County Manager Zinser replied that it is. Commissioner Ring motioned to accept the bid of \$479,455.00 from Southern Maine Communications for dispatch terminals using our ARPA funds. Commissioner Chenette seconded the motion. Vote 5-0.
- e. To authorize Sourcewell quote for two EMA drones.
County Manager Zinser explained this purchase will be funded by use of existing Federal funds through Homeland Security for our UAS team. The amount requested is \$12,512.00.
Commissioner Clark motioned to approve the purchase of the two drones in the amount of \$12,512.00 Commissioner Andrews seconded the motion.
DISCUSSION: Commissioner Ring asked if these drones are in addition to what we currently have or replacements? County Manager Zinser replied, in addition. Commissioner Ring asked if any additional training will be required (with the purchase of the two new drones)? EMA Director Art Cleaves explained that the current pilots are all qualified to use these drones. Vote 5-0.
- f. To address e-mail communication- County Manager Zinser explained that this issue is reference to an e-mail communication from a resident for taking and retaining notes. He continued that this is part of the internal operations of the Sheriff's Office which is within the Sheriff's sole authority. The County Manager asked if the Commissioners would like him to respond as such? Commissioner Ring motioned that the County Manager reply to the resident as recommended by county counsel. Commissioner Chenette seconded the motion. Vote 5-0.
- g. H.R. Director Corliss to seek approval of hiring/transfers of the following:
 - i. Andy Leary in the position of full-time Corrections Officer in the York County Sheriff's Office with an effective date of hire of August 7, 2023. Commissioner Clark motioned to approve the hiring of Andy Leary in the position of full-time Corrections Officer in the York County Sheriff's Office with an effective date of hire of August 7, 2023. Commissioner Andrews seconded the motion. Vote 5-0.
 - ii. David Temple in the position of reserve Corrections Officer in the York County Sheriff's Office with an effective date of hire of August 30, 2023 Commissioner Clark motioned to approve the hiring of David Temple in the position of reserve Corrections Officer in the York County Sheriff's Office with an effective date of hire of August 30, 2023. Commissioner Andrews seconded the motion. Vote 5-0.
 - iii. Ryan Succi in the position of full-time Corrections Officer in the York County Sheriff's Office with an effective date of hire of September 18, 2023 Commissioner Clark motioned to approve the hiring of Ryan Succi in the position of full-time Corrections Officer in the York County Sheriff's Office with an effective date of hire of September 18, 2023. Commissioner Andrews seconded the motion. Vote 5-0.
 - iv. Nicholas MacDonald in the position of full-time Corrections Officer in the York County Sheriff's Office with an effective date of hire of

September 18, 2023

Commissioner Clark motioned to approve the hiring of Nicholas MacDonald in the position of full-time Corrections Officer in the York County Sheriff's Office with an effective date of hire of September 18, 2023. Commissioner Andrews seconded the motion. Vote 5-0.

Commissioner Ring asked H.R. Director Corliss, with this hiring, how many full-time Corrections Officers will we have? H.R. Director Corliss replied, 49 full-time C.O.'s. She added that all newly hired corrections officers are scheduled to go the MCJA October class.

- v. Meaghan McAvoy in the position of full-time Victim Witness Advocate in the District Attorney's Office with an effective date of hire of September 11, 2023

Commissioner Clark motioned to approve the hiring of Meaghan McAvoy in the position of full-time Victim Witness Advocate in the District Attorney's Office with an effective date of hire of September 11, 2023. Commissioner Andrews seconded the motion. Vote 5-0.

- vi. David Pratt in the position of full-time Civil Process Officer in the York County Sheriff's Office with an effective date of hire of September 11, 2023
Commissioner Clark motioned to approve the hiring of David Pratt in the position of full-time Civil Process Officer in the York County Sheriff's Office with an effective date of hire of September 11, 2023. Commissioner Andrews seconded the motion. Vote 5-0. Commissioner Ring asked if Mr. Pratt was certified? H.R. Director Corliss responded, yes.

- vii. John Willey in the position of part-time Court Security Officer in the York County Sheriff's Office with an effective date of transfer of September 11, 2023

H.R. Director Corliss explained that this is a transfer of a current employee into a newly funded position in the budget.

Commissioner Clark motioned to approve the transfer of John Willey to part-time court security officer effective September 11, 2023. Commissioner Andrews seconded the motion. Vote 5-0.

H.R. Director Corliss requested to add one additional candidate- She explained that Faith Blanchette is a current reserve officer and has already attended the MCJA and is fully certified. She would like to go full-time.

Commissioner Ring motioned to approve Faith Blanchette from a part time to full time corrections officer effective September 18, 2023. Motion seconded by Commissioner Chenette. Vote 5-0.

- h. Discussion of Commissioners' meeting time

County Manager Zinser reminded the Commissioners that back in January they voted to move the meeting time from 4:30 to 5:00. Commissioner Dutremble requested that this item be put onto the agenda.

Commissioner Ring stated that she looked at all of the counties and only four meet after hours. Most meet during the day, she informed all. Commissioner Ring continued that she thinks a 6:30 p.m. or 7:00 p.m. meeting would be better. Many of the selectmen meetings are at night and the Commissioners did the same many years ago. She added that she doesn't think the 5:00 is helping or the 4:30. If we aren't doing evening, then why not earlier in the day.

Commissioner Chenette stated that he wished to build upon what Commissioner Ring has indicated. There are three months left in this calendar year and we are going to change meeting time and then set it again in January. Why would we

make a change for three months, he asked? He stated that while he appreciates Commissioner Dutremble's desire to circle back, we would now have to mark it and advertise to let people know. Commissioner Chenette stated that his take away from 4:30 to 5:00 it is that we need to make it later. Working Mainers need it to be later. All I have heard is that it is better for staff. I did not hear from any staff and also the staff did not elect us. I was elected by the people in my district. I hope that we think about the working Mainers. In the past this Commission has had a bit of apprehension for working Mainers. We should value their contribution. Why would we make it harder for them? Other municipalities' staff members attend. What department leaders have to be here vs. what dept. leaders wish to be here?

We need to give them the option to participate, continued Commissioner Chenette. If we are going to change a meeting time, he stated that he would suggest changing the time in January and how we make it easier not harder for them to participate. Commissioner Chenette stated that Cumberland County has 5:30 meetings but let's have that as a starting place.

Commissioner Clark stated that it was Commissioner Chenette's proposal that we meet at 5:00. He continued that he doesn't see an increase in public participation.

Commissioner Dutremble commented that it was a compromise he made to make it 5:00 instead of 6:00. In January, he explained, we stated that we would discuss this matter again in July or August so that is why he brought it back up. County Manager Zinser asked that the Commissioners refrain from involving the county employees in this discussion. It was not advanced by County employees. We will do what is asked of us, he stated.

Commissioner Chenette addressed all and stated that he appreciated the other Commissioner's comments. He asked what is the magic number that would make this commission see the value in the public's voice? We have to give our constituents the chance, commented Commissioner Chenette.

He said that he still had not heard of any arguments of any reasons why we need to make it harder for people to participate .

Commissioner Chenette motioned to leave the Commissioners' meeting start time at 5:00 Commissioner Ring seconded the motion. Vote 4-1 (Commissioner Clark opposed).

6 OLD BUSINESS

a. Dredge Discussion with "Dredge Authority"

County Manager Zinser informed the Board that members of the Southern Maine Dredge Authority are here to speak.

Kevin Roche addressed the Board and stated that they can't really proceed without knowing how the operational structure (of the dredge authority) is set up. He continued that they have a 501-3C set up and are working with the State. They also have by-laws, Mr. Roche stated as well as a Board of Directors. He stated that they are asking the Commissioners to approve one of three options they have presented or one of their own.

Commissioner Chenette thanked Kevin and David and asked them of the three options is there a preference as to which would be most effective?

David Plavin replied that he believed either complete ownership by the dredge authority or the county. One of the reasons we want the dredge authority to own

it, Mr. Plavin explained is that they could use the dredge as equity if they need to get a loan.

Kevin Roche stated that in the spirit of us getting to the vote and until we are ready, it sounds like the county wants to be on the Board so whomever you decide, we would like to have a strong team. He added that they are ready waiting for guidance and direction.

David Plavin added that they welcome Board participation and they appreciate that the County bought the dredge. He added that a Board seat is guaranteed no matter which option the Commissioners choose.

Commissioner Clark stated that he was under the impression from a letter from our lawyer that we cannot give the dredge away.

County Manager Zinser informed all that there are a couple of issues that lead us to seek guidance from the treasury. The guidelines for disposition of assets are clear but we would refer you to the rules of disposition. He continued that this tends to differ from some of the other projects (ARPA). Our preference was to give you the money to purchase the dredge but there was no authority at the time, explained County Manager Zinser.

We had to seek instructions from the Federal government that state a transfer to a non-federal entity must be given and you must pay fair market value.

County Manager Zinser continued that it is questionable as to whether or not the county or even you (dredge authority) can encumber the title.

The County Manager explained that he and others have been looking into these issues and there are hurdles that we need to get over before we have ownership discussions.

County Manager Zinser continued that most likely working out a lease agreement would make the most sense but that he understood from Rick Milliard, of the Southern Maine Dredge Authority Board that the Authority needs to leverage the title and we can't do this.

Kevin Roche replied that the Commissioners vote was "the county will retain ownership"... But the spirit was that you guys would retain ownership while we set something up. If there is a way for us to retain ownership, that is a viable solution, we should be able to operate on our own and have that asset, stated Mr Roche. But, if we can't, hopefully we can work out something.

Commissioner Chenette asked if there is a particular timeline to have this resolved to have operations for next year?

David Plavin explained that they do not have an executive director yet and that they would feel more comfortable having a better understanding of the ownership. He added that they are hopeful that you might have an answer for us at your October meeting.

County Manager Zinser asked is there any possibility of some of the other towns contributing some funding?

David Plavin responded that they might be able to do it but the problem would be to have it equally applied.

Kevin Roche commented that they do have \$150,000 and that they think they have found an outsourcing company that could staff the dredge.

County Manager Zinser asked them how they are intending to get the operation going?

David Plavin said by leveraging the dredge(asset).

Kevin Roche added that they still have grant sources and that they have a third party entity interested.

Commissioner Dutremble asked if Saco was still on board as they were going to originally contribute \$710,000.00.

David Plavin explained that was for a whole year and that they are still supportive

Commissioner Dutremble advised that the County Manager has been working on this so let's everyone be patient.

Kevin Roche stated that they encourage the Board selection as they don't want the Commissioners to miss out on the first official Board meeting.

County Manager Zinser stated that this Board needs to give this some thought so we can discuss further at another meeting. My focus has been the ownership of the dredge. We are finding issues here with how we do this, explained the County Manager.

Commissioner Dutremble commented that perhaps they look at the information presented and talk about it at the next meeting.

County Manager Zinser added that maybe having a separate meeting with round robin conversations.

- 7 TO CONDUCT AN EXECUTIVE SESSION ON PERSONNEL ISSUES PURSUANT TO 1 M.R.S.A. § 405 (6) (A), ACQUISITION OF REAL PROPERTY OR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PURSUANT TO 1 M.R.S.A. § 405 (6) (C), LABOR NEGOTIATIONS PURSUANT TO 1 M.R.S.A. § 405 (6) (D) AND CONSULTATION WITH LEGAL COUNSEL PURSUANT TO 1 M.R.S.A. § 405 (6) (E), REVIEW OF CONFIDENTIAL RECORDS PURSUANT TO 1 M.R.S.A. § 405 (6) (F)**
None

8 PUBLIC COMMENT(S) ON ANY ITEM(S)

Bonnie Laughlin- (public audience member who did not wish to state what town she lives in) addressed the Board to give her support to keep the meeting time at 5:00 or later. She stated that there is a learning curve to meetings. Perhaps hearing from the constituents that you all serve only when one is worked up about an issue is what you feel happens, but I'd like to feel that there is a warm welcome to come forward. There are over 216,000 people in York County.

9 ADJOURN

Commissioner Clark motioned to adjourn. Commissioner Andrews seconded the motion. Meeting adjourned at 6:30 p.m.